

AIR POUCH

PRIORITY

JUL 18 1955

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM:

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO:

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF:

Embassy despatch No. 43, July 13, 1955

DESP. NO.

JULY 15, 1955

DATE

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	RECD	OTHER
	EUR	RM/R, OLI, S/S, G, S/P, C
	721	CIA, OSD, ARMY, NAVY, AIR

SUBJECT:

Reply to Editorial on Porkkala Question

There is attached a translation of an editorial from "Maakansa" of Helsinki (Agrarian, editorial policy controlled by Prime Minister Kekkonen; Foreign Minister Virolainen is a member of the same party) for July 15, 1955. This editorial first refers to recent speeches by Professor A. I. Virtanen and Rector Ravila of Helsinki University which the paper criticized last week, and goes on to associate with these the July 13 editorial of "Helsingin Sanomat" suggesting that the time has come when the Soviet Union might in its own interest consider the desirability of abandoning its base at Porkkala.

"Maakansa" waited for two days before publishing its reply to "Helsingin Sanomat"; "Nya Pressen", a more alert paper to be sure, commented on the "Helsingin Sanomat" editorial the same day it appeared. Under these circumstances it does not appear impossible that Lebedev has told Kekkonen that "there is no ground for any . . . supposition (that Finland's foreign policy situation has to some degree changed as international tensions have been alleviated) . . . (Finland's) position is as it was before".

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From Helsinki

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Encl. No.

Desp. No.

From

For the Ambassador:

H. Bartlett Wells

H. Bartlett Wells
First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure: *att*

✓ Translation from "Maakansa", July 15, 1955.

cc: Amembassy Bern.

[Signature]

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TRANSLATION

(from "Maakansa", July 15, 1955)

Foreign Policy Blundering

It appears that there has been springing up here of late a sort of "private enterprise" in the field of foreign policy which holds its business and its right to be the distribution of counsel, guidance, and reproach not only to the foreign policy leadership of our own country, but also to others. Among phenomena of this kind there fall certain speeches and writings which have no esteem for that restraint which, with a view to the advantage of our country, has been put into practice during all the post-war years. When cautions have been put forward on this account, even by those in governmental positions, to the effect that matters must be considered in the light of hard realities rather than in the light of speeches at public festivals, those at the helm have been stigmatized as almost anti-patriotic and it has been claimed that the country's affairs are in a bad fix.

To the same class with these manifestations one must consign a recent editorial in one of the papers of the capital in which there was coolly brought forward the question of suppressing the Porkkala base. It is difficult to understand what aims and interests are primarily back of this editorial. Is the intention to range the areas lost in the war in some sort of order of importance, to emphasize the importance of Porkkala and to class the other areas as being of secondary importance in comparison to it?

Be these aims as they may, it is at any rate clear that the editorial in question does not promote the affair itself. One would suppose that the paper in question would understand - particularly when one considers that it is the paper of a man who in his time was even Foreign Minister himself - that matters of this character are so delicate that it is not desirable that they be brought within the field of public discussion. This - like other blundering in the field of foreign policy - easily gives rise to suspicions and corrodes a trust which has been established. Talk about territorial questions certainly arouses a great deal of interest - to deny this would be vain. Yet people must understand that such talk does not help the case but does it rather the reverse of good service. Conducting the foreign affairs of the country is not a matter for everybody, but one which should be left to the care of those who have been appointed for this purpose. Foreign affairs should not be made a playground, for this is of no benefit either to the general interests of the country or to the forwarding of any particular matter.

Since for years, at least in public discussions, we have been pretty well unanimous on the conduct of foreign policy, one must inquire with some astonishment for what purpose people have at this juncture undertaken to raise a ground swell concerning the subject. If the reason for this is, in addition to a search for tools to be used in the inevitable presidential campaign struggle, a notion in certain quarters that our country's foreign policy situation has to some degree changed as international tensions have been alleviated, it must be declared that there is no ground for any such supposition. Our position is as it was before. It is just as many faceted and delicate as it has ever been. This fact must be

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